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PRESS RELEASE

**U.S. NAVY AND BANGLADESH NAVY COMMENCE
3RD CARAT**

CHITTAGONG, SEP 16 -- The third annual exercise Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) Bangladesh commenced with an opening ceremony at Naval Base Issa Khan, Sept. 16.

Continuing through Sept. 21, CARAT Bangladesh 2013 consists of 6 days of shore-based and at-sea training events designed to address shared maritime security priorities, develop relationships, and enhance interoperability among participating forces.

“Our goal for this year’s CARAT is to continue the process of enhancing capacity and interoperability to address common maritime security concerns,” said Rear Adm. Cindy Thebaud, commander, Task Force 73 and commander, Naval Forces CARAT.

“This exercise offers a credible venue to bring our maritime professionals together, share best practices and strengthen our growing navy-to-navy partnership.”

CARAT Bangladesh is part of a series of bilateral naval exercises between the U.S. Navy and the armed forces of nine partner nations in South and Southeast Asia. Training events in each CARAT phase are tailored based on available assets and mutual exercise goals across a broad range of naval capabilities.

CARAT Bangladesh 2013 will focus on maritime security operations during a sea phase featuring a ship-rider exchange program and flight deck training. A shore phase will allow professionals to share best practices during symposia and subject matter expert exchanges that cover diving, small boat operations, military law and medical training. Receptions, sporting events and community service projects will broaden opportunities to develop personal relationships.

U.S. Navy units participating in the exercise include the rescue and salvage ship USNS Safeguard (T-ARS 50), Commander, Task Group 73.1/ Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 7 staff, personnel from Afloat Training Group Western Pacific, as well as evaluators from Maritime Civil Affairs and Security Training Command.

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